

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 20, 2013

Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

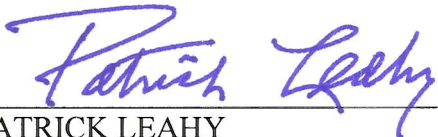
We understand you are evaluating options to cut Army National Guard end strength, force structure and aviation assets in order to meet budgetary requirements. We are concerned that such proposals will have irreversible impacts on the Guard's ability to respond to emergency events at home and support future overseas missions. We are also aware of the Guard's separate cost-efficient plan that would save the same amount of money and preserve capabilities for the Nation.

This generation of men and women in the Army National Guard and Reserve has proven effective, committed, and capable—indistinguishable on the battlefield from their Active Component counterparts. This provides the Nation with a unique and limited window for capitalizing on a nearly unprecedented level of professionalism and expertise in its Reserve Component. That is why we believe proposals that reduce the Army National Guard to 315,000 are untenable. Such reductions would threaten its ability to function as a cost-effective, dual-use force and would dangerously reduce our nation's strategic depth.

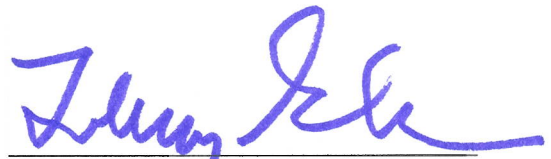
As you are aware, Congress rejected steep cuts proposed to force structure for the Air National Guard in Fiscal Year 2013. However, since that time, we have been pleased at the cooperation in the Air Force between the Active and Reserve Components within the regular process. We hope that any proposal from the Army will be forged through a process that includes the Army National Guard as a full partner and similarly considers all of the Nation's needs—both foreign and domestic.

We appreciate your willingness to consider multiple courses of action in pursuit of the most effective, efficient Department of Defense. With regards to our Army's end-strength and structure, we strongly encourage you to avoid courses of action that lead to unnecessarily large reductions that inhibit the Nation's ability to respond to world events and domestic emergencies. We look forward to working with you to ensure a strong Total Army in the future.

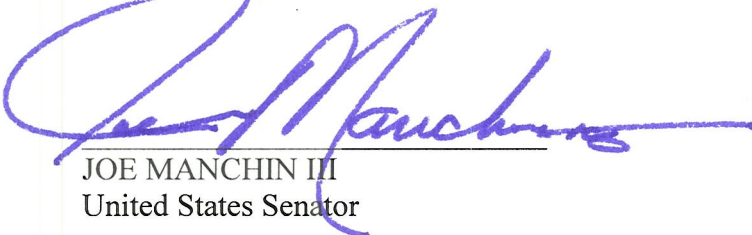
Sincerely,



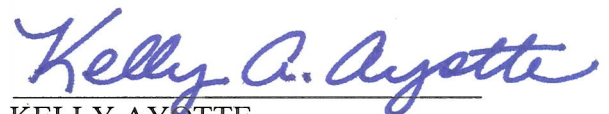
PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



LINDSEY O. GRAHAM
United States Senator



JOE MANCHIN III
United States Senator



KELLY AYOTTE
United States Senator

Jay Ruppel

Susan Collins

Tom Hankin

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Bert Sanders

John Thune

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Ma R

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Mark Royce

John Barrasso

Th Wp

Michael B. Enzi

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John Cornyn

Stanne Shaker

Robert Menendez

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Ron Johnson

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Saxby Chambliss

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Chuck Grassley

Pete Stenger

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Bill Vibran

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Joe Nechasek

Jerry Moran

John Hosen

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Tom Carper

Tim Hille

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Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Ans

Mazni K Aliano